
Unit 2: ICS Overview



Unit 2: ICS Overview



Visual Description: Unit Introduction

Key Points

Unit 2 provides a general overview of the Incident Command System, or ICS.

The next visual, shown on the following page, outlines the objectives for this unit.



Unit Objectives

- Identify three purposes of the Incident Command System (ICS).
- Identify requirements to use ICS.



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ICS Overview

Visual 2.2

Visual Description: Unit Objectives

Key Points

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Identify three purposes of the Incident Command System (ICS).
 - Using management best practices, ICS helps to ensure:
 - The safety of responders and others.
 - The achievement of tactical objectives.
 - The efficient use of resources.
- Identify requirements to use ICS.
 - National Incident Management Systems (NIMS)
 - Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) – 1986
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Rule 1910.120
 - State and Local Regulations

Topic

What Is an Incident?



What Is an Incident?

An incident is . . .

. . . an occurrence, either caused by human or natural phenomena, that requires response actions to prevent or minimize loss of life, or damage to property and/or the environment.



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Visual 2.3

Visual Description: What Is an Incident?

Key Points

An incident is an occurrence, either caused by human or natural phenomena, that requires response actions to prevent or minimize loss of life, or damage to property and/or the environment.

Note that examples of incidents include:

- Fire, both structural and wildland.
- Natural disasters, such as tornadoes, floods, ice storms, or earthquakes.
- Human and animal disease outbreaks.
- Search and rescue missions.
- Hazardous materials incidents.
- Criminal acts and crime scene investigations.
- Terrorist incidents, including the use of weapons of mass destruction.
- National Special Security Events, such as Presidential visits or the Super Bowl.
- Other planned events, such as parades or demonstrations.



Jot down additional types of incidents that you can think of.



What Is ICS?

The Incident Command System:

- Is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept.
- Allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

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Visual 2.4

Visual Description: What Is ICS?

Key Points

Note the following points:

- Given the magnitude of some incidents, it's not always possible for any one agency alone to handle the management and resource needs.
- Partnerships are often required among local, State, tribal, and Federal agencies. These partners must work together in a smooth, coordinated effort under the same management system.

The Incident Command System (ICS):

- Is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept.
- Allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.



ICS Purposes

Using management best practices, ICS helps to ensure:

- The safety of responders and others.
- The achievement of tactical objectives.
- The efficient use of resources.



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Visual 2.5

Visual Description: ICS Purposes

Key Points

By using management best practices, ICS helps to ensure:

- The safety of responders and others.
- The achievement of tactical objectives.
- The efficient use of resources.

ICS has considerable internal flexibility. It can grow or shrink to meet different needs. This flexibility makes it a very cost-effective and efficient management approach for both small and large situations.



History of ICS

Weaknesses in incident management were due to:

- Lack of accountability.
- Poor communication.
- Lack of a planning process.
- Overloaded Incident Commanders.
- No method to integrate interagency requirements.

The identification of these areas of management weakness resulted in the development of ICS.

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Visual 2.6

Visual Description: History of ICS

Key Points

Review the following background information:

- The Incident Command System (ICS) was developed in the 1970s following a series of catastrophic fires in California's urban interface. Property damage ran into the millions, and many people died or were injured.
- The personnel assigned to determine the causes of this disaster studied the case histories and discovered that response problems could rarely be attributed to lack of resources or failure of tactics. Surprisingly, studies found that response problems were far more likely to result from inadequate management than from any other single reason.

Weaknesses in incident management were due to:

- Lack of accountability.
- Poor communication.
- Lack of a planning process.
- Overloaded Incident Commanders.
- No method to integrate interagency requirements.

The identification of these areas of management weakness resulted in the development of ICS.

For additional information refer to the next page.

ICS Background

The concept of ICS was developed more than 30 years ago, in the aftermath of a devastating wildfire in California. During 13 days in 1970, 16 lives were lost, 700 structures were destroyed, and over one-half million acres burned. The overall cost and loss associated with these fires totaled \$18 million per day. Although all of the responding agencies cooperated to the best of their ability, numerous problems with communication and coordination hampered their effectiveness.

As a result, the Congress mandated that the U.S. Forest Service design a system that would “make a quantum jump in the capabilities of Southern California wildland fire protection agencies to effectively coordinate interagency action and to allocate suppression resources in dynamic, multiple-fire situations.”

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection; the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services; the Los Angeles, Ventura, and Santa Barbara County Fire Departments; and the Los Angeles City Fire Department joined with the U.S. Forest Service to develop the system. This system became known as FIREScope (Firefighting RESources of California Organized for Potential Emergencies). In 1973, the first “FIREScope Technical Team” was established to guide the research and development design. Two major components came out of this work, the ICS and the Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS).

The FIREScope ICS is primarily a command and control system delineating job responsibilities and organizational structure for the purpose of managing day-to-day operations for all types of emergency incidents. By the mid-seventies, the FIREScope agencies had formally agreed on ICS common terminology and procedures and conducted limited field-testing of ICS. By 1980, parts of ICS had been used successfully on several major wildland and urban fire incidents. It was formally adopted by the Los Angeles Fire Department, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), and the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES), and endorsed by the State Board of Fire Services.

Also during the 1970s, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) was chartered to coordinate fire management programs of the various participating Federal and State agencies.

By 1980, FIREScope ICS training was under development. Recognizing that in addition to the local users for which it was designed, the FIREScope training could satisfy the needs of other State and Federal agencies, the NWCG conducted an analysis of FIREScope ICS for possible national application.

By 1981, ICS was widely used throughout Southern California by the major fire agencies. In addition, the use of ICS in response to non-fire incidents was increasing. Although FIREScope ICS was originally developed to assist in the response to wildland fires, it was quickly recognized as a system that could help public safety responders provide effective and coordinated incident management for a wide range of situations, including floods, hazardous materials accidents, earthquakes, and aircraft crashes. It was flexible enough to manage catastrophic incidents involving thousands of emergency response and management personnel.

By introducing relatively minor terminology, organizational, and procedural modifications to FIREScope ICS, the NIIMS ICS became adaptable to an all-hazards environment. While tactically each type of incident may be handled somewhat differently, the overall incident management approach still utilizes the major functions of the Incident Command System. The FIREScope board of directors and the NWCG recommended national application of ICS.

In 1982, all FIREScope ICS documentation was revised and adopted as the National Interagency Incident Management System (NIIMS). In the years since FIREScope and the NIIMS were blended, the FIREScope agencies and the NWCG have worked together to update and maintain the Incident Command System Operational System Description (ICS 120-1). This document would later serve as the basis for the NIMS ICS.

ICS Variations

In the early 1970s, the Phoenix Fire Department developed the Fire Ground Command System (FGC). The concepts of FGC were similar to FIRESCOPE ICS but there were differences in terminology and in organizational structure. The FGC system was developed for structural firefighting and was designed for operations of 25 or fewer companies.

There were several efforts to “blend” the various incident command systems. One early effort was in 1987 when the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) undertook the development of NFPA 1561, then called Standard on Fire Department Incident Management System. The NFPA committee quickly recognized that the majority of the incident command systems in existence at the time were similar.

The differences among the systems were mostly due to variations in terminology for similar components. That NFPA standard, later revised to its present title: Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management, provides for organizations to adopt or modify existing systems to suit local requirements or preferences as long as they meet specific performance measurements. Recognizing the continuing challenges occurring in the fire service in applying a common approach to incident command, the National Fire Service Incident Management System (IMS) Consortium was created in 1990. Its purpose was to evaluate an approach to developing a single command system. The consortium consisted of many individual fire service leaders, representatives of most major fire service organizations and representatives of Federal, State, and local agencies, including FIRESCOPE and the Phoenix Fire Department. One of the significant outcomes of the consortium’s work was an agreement on the need to develop operational protocols within ICS, so that fire and rescue personnel would be able to apply the ICS as one common system.

In 1993, the IMS consortium completed its first document: Model Procedures Guide for Structural Firefighting. As a result, FIRESCOPE incorporated the model procedures, thereby enhancing its organizational structure with operational protocols. These changes enabled the Nation’s fire and rescue personnel to apply the ICS effectively regardless of what region of the country they were assigned to work. The National Fire Academy (NFA), having already adopted the FIRESCOPE ICS in 1980, incorporated this material into its training curriculum as well.

Source: NIMS Integration Center



Knowledge Review (1 of 2)

Instructions: Decide if the statement is TRUE or FALSE.

ICS could be used to manage a training conference, charity fundraising event, or emergency response and recovery.

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Visual 2.7

Visual Description: True or False? ICS could be used to manage a training conference, charity fundraising event, or emergency response and recovery.

Key Points

Is the following statement TRUE or FALSE?



ICS could be used to manage a training conference, charity fundraising event, or emergency response and recovery.



Knowledge Review (2 of 2)

Instructions: Decide if the statement is TRUE or FALSE.

The study of previous incident responses found that failures likely resulted from a lack of resources.

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Visual 2.8

Visual Description: True or False? The study of previous incident responses found that failures likely resulted from a lack of resources.

Key Points

Is the following statement TRUE or FALSE?



The study of previous incident responses found that failures likely resulted from a lack of resources.



Visual Description: Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPDs)

Key Points

Complex 21st century threats, exemplified by the horrific events of September 11, 2001, demand that all Americans share responsibility for homeland security. All levels of government, the private sector, and nongovernmental agencies must be prepared to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from a wide spectrum of major events that exceed the capabilities of any single entity. These hazards require a unified and coordinated national approach to planning and to domestic incident management. To address this need, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5: Management of Domestic Incidents (HSPD-5) and Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8: National Preparedness (HSPD-8) establish the following national initiatives that develop a common approach to preparedness and response.

- **HSPD-5** identifies steps for improved coordination in response to incidents. It requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to coordinate with other Federal departments and agencies and State, local, and tribal governments to establish a National Response Plan (NRP) and a National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- **HSPD-8** describes the way Federal departments and agencies will prepare. It requires DHS to coordinate with other Federal departments and agencies and State, local, and tribal governments to develop a National Preparedness Goal

Together, NIMS, the NRP, and the National Preparedness Goal define what needs to be done to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from a major event, how it needs to be done, and how well it needs to be done. Together, these related efforts align Federal, State, local, tribal, private sector, and nongovernmental preparedness, incident management, and emergency response plans into an effective and efficient national structure.



National Preparedness Goal

To engage Federal, State, local, and tribal entities, their private and nongovernmental partners, and the general public to achieve and sustain risk-based target levels of capability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from major events to minimize the impact on lives, property, and the economy.



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Visual 2.10

Visual Description: National Preparedness Goal

Key Points

Note the following key points about the National Preparedness Goal.

- On December 17, 2003, the President issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 “National Preparedness” (HSPD-8). The purpose of HSPD-8 is to “establish policies to strengthen the preparedness of the United States to prevent and respond to threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies by requiring a national domestic all-hazards preparedness goal, establishing mechanisms for improved delivery of Federal preparedness assistance to State and local governments, and outlining actions to strengthen preparedness capabilities of Federal, State, and local entities.”
- The National Preparedness Goal guides Federal departments and agencies; State, territorial, local, and tribal officials; the private sector; nongovernment organizations; and the public in determining how to most effectively and efficiently strengthen preparedness for terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.
- The following Interim National Preparedness Goal was released on March 31, 2005:

“To engage Federal, State, local, and tribal entities, their private and nongovernmental partners, and the general public to achieve and sustain risk-based target levels of capability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from major events to minimize the impact on lives, property, and the economy.”



NIMS & NRP



- **NIMS:** Standardizes incident management processes, protocols, and procedures for use by all responders. Mandates use of ICS.



- **NRP:** Establishes . . .
 - Federal coordination structures/mechanisms.
 - Direction for incorporation of existing plans.
 - Consistent approach to managing incidents.

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Visual 2.11

Visual Description: NIMS & NRP

Key Points

Note the following key points about NIMS and NRP:

- **NIMS** provides a consistent framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels regardless of the cause, size, or complexity of the incident. Building upon the Incident Command System (ICS), the NIMS provides the Nation's first responders and authorities with the same foundation for incident management for terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and other emergencies. NIMS requires that ICS be institutionalized.
- The **NRP** is an all-discipline, all-hazards plan for the management of domestic incidents. Using the template established by the NIMS, the NRP provides the structure and mechanisms to coordinate and integrate incident management activities and emergency support functions across Federal, State, local, and tribal government entities, the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations.

Additional information about the NIMS requirement regarding "Institutionalizing the Use of ICS" is located on the next page.

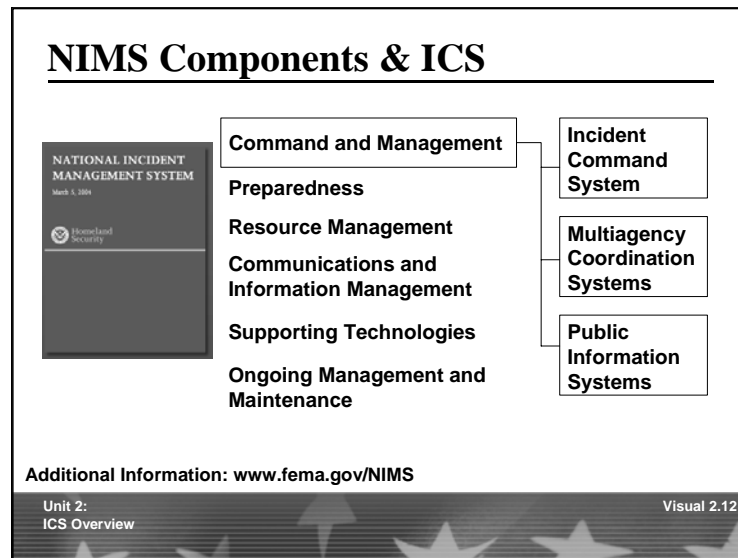
Additional Information on Institutionalizing the Use of ICS

According to the NIMS Integration Center, “institutionalizing the use of ICS” means that government officials, incident managers, and emergency response organizations at all jurisdictional levels adopt the Incident Command System. Actions to institutionalize the use of ICS take place at two levels - policy and organizational/operational.

At the policy level, institutionalizing the ICS means government officials, i.e., governors, mayors, county and city managers, tribal leaders, and others:

- Adopt the ICS through executive order, proclamation, or legislation as the jurisdiction's official incident response system; and
- Direct that incident managers and response organizations in their jurisdictions train, exercise, and use the ICS in their response operations. At the organizational/operational level, evidence that incident managers and emergency response organizations are institutionalizing the ICS would include the following:
 - ICS is being integrated into functional and system-wide emergency operations policies, plans, and procedures;
 - ICS training is planned or under way for responders, supervisors, and command-level officers;
 - Responders at all levels are participating in and/or coordinating ICS-oriented exercises that involve responders from multiple disciplines and jurisdictions.

Additional information about NIMS can be found online at www.fema.gov/NIMS.



Visual Description: NIMS Components & ICS

Key Points

ICS is only one facet of NIMS. Note the following key points:

- NIMS integrates existing best practices into a consistent, nationwide approach to domestic incident management that is applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines in an all-hazards context.
- Six major components make up the NIMS systems approach. Following is a synopsis of each major component of NIMS, as well as how these components work together as a system to provide the national framework for preparing for, preventing, responding to, and recovering from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.
 - **Command and Management.** NIMS standard incident command structures are based on three key organizational systems:
 - **ICS.** ICS defines the operating characteristics, interactive management components, and structure of incident management and emergency response organizations engaged throughout the life cycle of an incident;
 - **Multiagency Coordination Systems.** These define the operating characteristics, interactive management components, and organizational structure of supporting incident management entities engaged at the Federal, State, local, tribal, and regional levels through mutual-aid agreements and other assistance arrangements; and
 - **Public Information Systems.** These refer to processes, procedures, and systems for communicating timely and accurate information to the public during crisis or emergency situations.

- **Preparedness.** Effective incident management begins with a host of preparedness activities conducted on a “steady-state” basis, well in advance of any potential incident. Preparedness involves an integrated combination of planning, training, exercises, personnel qualification and certification standards, equipment acquisition and certification standards, and publication management processes and activities.
- **Resource Management.** NIMS defines standardized mechanisms and establishes requirements for processes to describe, inventory, mobilize, dispatch, track, and recover resources over the life cycle of an incident.
- **Communications and Information Management.** NIMS identifies the requirement for a standardized framework for communications, information management (collection, analysis, and dissemination), and information sharing at all levels of incident management.
- **Supporting Technologies.** Technology and technological systems provide supporting capabilities essential to implementing and continuously refining NIMS. These technologies include voice and data communications systems, information management systems (i.e., recordkeeping and resource tracking), and data display systems. Also included are specialized technologies that facilitate ongoing operations and incident management activities in situations that call for unique technology-based capabilities.
- **Ongoing Management and Maintenance.** This component establishes an activity to provide strategic direction for and oversight of NIMS, supporting both routine review and the continuous refinement of the system and its components over the long term.



Other ICS Mandates

- Hazardous Materials Incidents
 - Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) – 1986
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Rule 1910.120
- State and Local Regulations



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Visual 2.13

Visual Description: Other ICS Mandates

Key Points

In addition to the NIMS mandate, the following laws require the use of ICS:

- The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986 established Federal regulations for handling hazardous materials. SARA directed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to establish rules for operations at hazardous materials incidents.
- OSHA rule 1910.120, effective March 6, 1990, requires all organizations that handle hazardous materials to use ICS. The regulation states: “The Incident Command System shall be established by those employers for the incidents that will be under their control and shall interface with other organizations or agencies who may respond to such an incident.”

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires States to use ICS at hazardous materials incidents.



ICS Benefits

- Meets the needs of incidents of any kind or size.
- Allows personnel from a variety of agencies to meld rapidly into a common management structure.
- Provides logistical and administrative support to operational staff.
- Is cost effective by avoiding duplication of efforts.



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Visual 2.14

Visual Description: ICS Benefits

Key Points

ICS is designed to be interdisciplinary and organizationally flexible.

The benefits of ICS include:

- Meets the needs of incidents of any kind or size.
- Allows personnel from a variety of agencies to meld rapidly into a common management structure.
- Provides logistical and administrative support to operational staff.
- Is cost effective by avoiding duplication of efforts.

**Activity: Management Challenges (1 of 2)****Instructions:**

1. Working as a team, review the scenario presented on the next visual.
2. Identify the top three challenges for managing this incident. Write these challenges on chart paper.
3. Using what you have learned so far, describe how ICS could be used to address these challenges.
4. Select a spokesperson. Be prepared to present in 5 minutes.

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Visual 2.15

Visual Description: Activity: Management Challenges (1 of 2)**Key Points**

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to illustrate how ICS can be used to address incident management issues.

Instructions: Follow the steps below to complete this activity:

1. Work as a team to review the scenario presented on the next visual.
2. Identify the top three challenges for managing this incident. Write the challenges on chart paper.
3. Your group should also discuss how ICS could be used to address these challenges.
4. Select a spokesperson for your group and be prepared to present in 5 minutes.

Topic

Activity: Management Challenges

**Activity: Management Challenges (2 of 2)**

Scenario: An unexpected flash flood has struck a small community. As a result:

- Homes, schools, and the business district have been evacuated.
- Critical infrastructure has been damaged including contamination of the water supply, downed power lines, and damaged roads.
- Perimeter control and security in the business district are needed.
- Mutual aid is arriving from several surrounding communities.

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Visual 2.16

Visual Description: Activity: Management Challenges (2 of 2)

Key Points**Review the following scenario:**

An unexpected flash flood has struck a small community. As a result:

- Homes, schools, and the business district have been evacuated.
- Critical infrastructure has been damaged including contamination of the water supply, downed power lines, and damaged roads.
- Perimeter control and security in the business district are needed.
- Mutual aid is arriving from several surrounding communities.



What are the top three challenges for managing this incident? (Write these on chart paper.)



How could ICS be used to address these challenges? (Write these on chart paper.)



Summary (1 of 2)

Instructions: Answer the questions below.

- What are three purposes of ICS?
- What are the requirements to use ICS?



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Visual 2.17

Visual Description: Summary (1 of 2)

Key Points

Are you now able to:

- Identify requirements to use the Incident Command System (ICS)?
 - National Incident Management Systems (NIMS)
 - Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) – 1986
 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Rule 1910.120
 - State and Local Regulations
- Identify three purposes of ICS?
 - Using management best practices, ICS helps to ensure:
 - The safety of responders and others.
 - The achievement of tactical objectives.
 - The efficient use of resources.



Summary (2 of 2)

ICS . . .

- Is a standardized management tool for meeting the demands of small or large emergency or nonemergency situations.
- Represents "best practices," and has become the standard for emergency management across the country.
- May be used for planned events, natural disasters, and acts of terrorism.
- Is a key feature of NIMS.

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Visual 2.18

Visual Description: Summary (2 of 2)

Key Points

Remember that ICS:

- Is a standardized management tool for meeting the demands of small or large emergency or nonemergency situations.
- Represents "best practices," and has become the standard for emergency management across the country.
- May be used for planned events, natural disasters, and acts of terrorism.
- Is a key feature of NIMS.

The next unit will cover the basic features of ICS.